

NOTES FROM

MEETING OF SOME INTERESTED PARTIES

IN

DEVELOPMENT OF WORK COOPERATIVES

held at 380 Sydney Road, Brunswick on - Friday, 24th October, 1980.

1. Object of Meeting

The main purpose of the meeting was to provide a forum for discussion and a consensus of views to be agreed on the subject of needs and expectations of Work Cooperative Groups from the policies and actions of the Victorian Government through its Employment Committee.

2. Discussion

David Griffiths on the staff of the Victorian Employment Committee reported that the Guidebook for Small Businesses and Cooperatives, commissioned by the V.E.C. has been completed, considered by the Committee and authorised for printing and publication. He indicated the current Government Budget makes little or no provision of funds for development programmes by the V.E.C.

Members present generally agreed the actions of the Government in implementing policies announced by the Premier for development of job creation programmes through self-help groups have been most unsatisfactory. It was accepted any Government funding programme should have an inbuilt system of establishing criteria and guidelines and accountability procedures. However, to date, experience has shown that when funds have been approved by the Committee, the Government machinery to execute payment of such funds has not been cleared, resulting in interminable delays and embarrassment with creditors, banks and local community groups.

The meeting agreed V.E.C. funding is needed to establish self-help groups in areas such as:

Feasibility Studies
Establishment Costs
Management/Administration
Capital Equipment
Initial Operating Expenses

3. Decision

The meeting agreed:

The V.E.C. should make a clear statement on the Government's policy towards small businesses and Cooperatives as part of its job creation programme.

V.E.C. should have access to specific funds to be disbursed in line with its policies.

V.E.C. should ensure Government machinery is cleared to ensure prompt payment of funds when authorised.

Funds should be made available to cover cost initially of one central co-ordinator and development officer for Work Cooperatives to be located in the office of the Cooperative Federation of Victoria.

Funds should be made available for feasibility studies to be undertaken and, where required, for consultancy work on business ventures.

A system of policy guidelines in general terms, acceptable to those who will be governed by them, should be prepared.

The meeting agreed:

A letter be prepared and submitted to the V.E.C. setting out the views expressed above. Helga, Rod, Graeme and Josie accepted responsibility for this job.

It was also agreed:

An informal meeting be organised with two or three members of the V.E.C. to brief them on the needs and expectations of the V.E.C., the initiatives developed to date and the frustrations experienced.

It was suggested the group be represented by:

Max Llewelyn
Rob Alliston
Gail from Nunawading
Brunswick Cooperative representative

Bill Rawlinson will arrange this when requested by the Group.

4. Group Representation
on Council Cooperative Federation

The Group was invited to consider nominating one person who could act as their representative on the Cooperative Federation of Victoria Council.

5. Appreciation

The Group recorded its appreciation to Steve Einfeld for his work in bringing them together in the series of meetings held to date.